Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development

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SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS: THE TORONTO ROUNDTABLE ON THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY - CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA

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May 18, 2001

The Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development and
The Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto

On May 18, 2001, the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, in partnership with the Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto, organised a roundtable on Directions in U.S. Foreign Policy. The roundtable was the fourth in a series of discussions held in Canada and the U.S. over a three-month period (San Diego - March 20, Washington - April 2, Edmonton - April 12, and Halifax - June 15). Participants discussed emerging security issues and trade and globalization.

Among the participants were Stanley Hoffmann (Harvard University), Janice Gross Stein (Munk Centre, University of Toronto), Raj Bhala (George Washington University), Robert Bothwell (Trinity College), Marc L. Busch (Queen's School of Business), Stephen Clarkson (University of Toronto), Andrew Cohen (Globe and Mail), Ann Denholm Crosby (York University), Alan Alexandroff (Munk Centre, University of Toronto), John English (University of Waterloo), Beth Fischer (Munk Centre, University of Toronto), Fen Hampson (Carleton University), Phillip Hoffmann (U.S. Consulate General), Erika Simpson (University of Western Ontario), Ole Holsti (Duke University), John Kirton (University of Toronto), Remonda Bensabat-Kleinberg (University of North Carolina at Wilmington), Paul T. Mitchell (Canadian Forces College), Sylvia Ostry (University of Toronto), and Louis Pauly (Munk Centre, University of Toronto). Steven Lee (Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development) and Robert Vipond (University of Toronto) chaired and made opening remarks. Micheal Dawson (U.S. Relations Division, Blair Bobyk (U.S. Relations Division), Julie Rechel (CCFPD) and Chantale Walker (CCFPD) attended from DFAIT.

SESSION 1. WASHINGTON AND EMERGING SECURITY ISSUES
Speaker: Stanley Hoffmann (Harvard University)

- It must be recognized that a new administration takes a very long time to establish itself. For the new Bush administration, where a number of resemblances with the Reagan era are apparent, there has been a major sense of self-congratulatory sentiment about the U.S. as the only super-power and a belief that American predominance can not be challenged. At the same time, there exists a strong sense of being surrounded by enemies and being threatened from all directions. This focus on external enemies, very prevalent in the Reagan era, is in stark contrast to the Clinton presidency.

- The Bush administration is promoting a return to the force of military power and is considerably reinforcing the notion of unilateralism. Other than this, there is no clear policy for any part of the world under the current administration.
- The U.S. political centre is shifting to the heartland of America. Deeply held religious beliefs, a primary interest in the Hemisphere, and a notion of Manifest Destiny, are some of the heartland values which will increasingly influence the U.S. foreign policy dynamic. The progressive, coastal establishment is being increasingly marginalized. The core beliefs may not be isolationism, but rather a sort of conservative internationalism rooted in strongly held social values.

Unilateralism and Foreign Policy Power:

- Unilateralist tendencies have taken the form of suspicion over the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), the unwillingness of the U.S. to sign the Kyoto Protocol, and talk of a possible withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Balkans.
- The return to military force in Bush's administration is a result of a reordering of priorities revolving around a primitive form of Realism that will be counter-productive. These new priorities bring about a focus on China as a possible threat (a potential enemy capable of threatening American presence in the Western Pacific) and on "rogue" states. Russia policy is still in limbo and it is not clear whether Russia is seen as a friend or a potential enemy, although the Bush administration is hopeful in enlisting Russian support on BMD.
- The ease with which the elites can work themselves into a state of anxiety over threat perception is striking. This new emphasis on force is disturbing in that it involves a militarization of foreign policy which gives up the normative stability of arms control, makes the weaponization of space possible, and dismisses the importance of humanitarian interventions. This new emphasis is also a visible move away from diplomacy.
- The launching of BMD consultations in an effort to gain support from allies was striking in that it took the form of information-giving rather than actual consultation.
- The Bush administration's concerns and foreign policy priorities are: (1) space; (2) China/Pacific; (3) preventing Europe from military expansion; and (4) furthering good relations with neighbouring countries.

Public:

- The public is perfectly sensible - it does not feel threatened by the possibility of North Korea dropping nuclear missiles on the U.S..
- There are two disturbing arguments being debated in the public sphere: (1) the argument that the U.S. is so powerful it does not need to take international norms into account, international law does not apply to the U.S. (and therefore the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is not necessary); and (2) the argument that the U.S. is the foundation of world order with a prophetic role in the world. This growing exceptionalist sentiment within the U.S. increasingly sees international regimes as a burden on America's sovereign right to act as it wishes in the international sphere. The view that the U.S. should not have to accept behavioural limits and should seek to liberate itself from

international constraints is one of the biggest challenges facing Canada.

DISCUSSION

Foreign Policy Incoherence

- We are dealing with a long tradition of incoherence in U.S. foreign policy; a long tradition of conflicted impulses in approaches to international affairs.
- How far does this incoherence level go? Does it go as far as irrationality and counter-productiveness?
- Although President Bush is very focussed on domestic policy issues and has yet to demonstrate a distinct foreign policy, Canada must keep in mind that U.S. foreign policy issues are tied to domestic economic issues. Incoherent unilateralism has already become apparent in U.S. foreign policy and the real question is how long will the incoherence continue.
- There is a large concern for unilateralism versus multilateralism.
- Foreign policy is increasingly being made in the Pentagon as opposed to the State Department.
- Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld knows exactly what he wants and as demonstrated by the flap over Chinese military contacts and possible plans for the weaponization of space, unliateralist tendencies are clearly emanating from the Pentagon. Colin Powell has diplomatic instincts and has been a voice of moderation on virtually every issue so far. He is also the only Cabinet official with an independent base and national constituency.
- Bush`s foreign policy team consists of a number of strong personalities, many of whom have served in high-level positions in earlier Republican administrations. They can be characterised as competent, managerial technocrats, however lacking strong political ideas.
- Some feel that a certain degree of fabrication of threats has occurred as a sort of distraction. The existence of an external enemy can serve to temper domestic tensions and keep the centrifugal forces from tearing the American social/political fabric apart.
- Policy incoherence also stems from the structure of the U.S. political system: i.e. separation of powers and federalism. For example, the Constitution explicitly grants Congress the authority to formulate foreign commercial policy.

Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)

- BMD has become an issue of theology. No matter how much it has failed in the past, it is time for a resurrection. The argument goes that BMD does not necessarily have to work but only be perceived as functioning in the eyes of "rogue" states.
- The Canadian government has shown remarkable restraint regarding BMD. It can be argued that the Canadian government has four possible responses to BMD:
    1. BMD is a bad idea since missile defences in general are destabilizing;
    2. Canada supports BMD because the "rogue" state threat is real and Canada would like to have a say in BMD contracts;

3. Canada adopts the Tony Blair option: The U.S. can do whatever it likes as long as it consults with Russia, China and other allies first and does not tear up the ABM treaty or other longstanding arms control treaties; and/or
4. Canada has not seen details on BMD yet and it does not support abstract concepts.

- There is also a fifth option to Canada's possible responses to BMD, namely diplomacy. Canada can offer some assistance in this regard. Since BMD is a *fait accompli*, Canada can help minimize the extent to which it can be destabilizing. This should be possible since Canada is a partner in NORAD, is more adept at multilateralism, is a type of mediator between the U.S. and the international community, and works to make Washington's aims more apparent while also relaying outside ideas back to Washington.
- However, the strategy taken up by Canada is to wait and hide behind the Europeans. Given that the U.S. is Canada's neighbour, Canada can afford to wait and let others make up their minds first. The Europeans have a common foreign policy and are creating their own rapid reaction force. The "big 4" of Europe will coordinate their answer and their likely response will be against BMD. France fears the destabilization of the international system.
- However, it is misleading to talk about the Pentagon's views on BMD in a monolithic sense. The Pentagon itself is comprised of the Office of the Secretary of Defence and four units. Given the fact that Bush has indicated that no more funds be given for defence, there will be intense competition among the units over modernization and the procurement of new weapons systems. These initiatives will also have to compete with BMD priorities. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that the proposed cost of BMD is only a fraction of America's defence and total federal budgets.
- While some view the plan to develop a system of missile defences as an elaborate and expensive job creation strategy, others argue that the Department of Defence's 'transformational agenda' to upgrade the U.S. military with next generation equipment and weapon systems is a more logical choice in terms of industrial strategy. The transformational agenda offers a much wider and deeper extension of economic benefits across congressional districts than missile defence programs.
- The current debate over BMD is a wonderful distraction from discussing the real security issues. We should be focussing on what the security issues of the day are – longstanding regional conflicts, such as the Congo and the Middle East – and what violent conflicts we will be dealing with in the near future (conflicts are not solely intra-state but have regional dimensions as well). Ottawa should take a wait and see approach regarding BMD but should not wait too long to make a decision so as to avoid focussing excessive resources to something that is not the central security issue.

China

- The need for enemies in the U.S. is very clear. The issue of China can potentially damage the domestic coalition Bush is trying to create.
- China-U.S. relations are central to understanding what is going on with U.S. relations. There is a desire for a tense relationship between China and the U.S. in order to maintain

utility. Canada needs to think a lot more about the split in Congress and this split is not caused by China, although China may cause some sparks, it is not the cause of the divide.

Diplomacy

- There is a turn away from diplomacy in the U.S.. North Korea is an example of this. As well, instead of promoting gradual rapprochement between Taiwan and China, the U.S. has reverted to purely military measures. A similar course of action can be seen in relation to NATO enlargement.
- There is a need to direct the U.S. back to a view of the world where diplomacy is centre-stage.
- If it is true that the U.S. is withdrawing from diplomacy and relying on technology and military force in the world, then that combined with the Asia Pacific threat, will not allow the U.S. to be the only power to shape trends in the world.

Public

- It is necessary to look back to the heartland of America and away from the elites. The heartland of America is more deeply religious than are Canadians. The American people are also convinced that the ballistic missile shield already exists.
- The public is more worried about the main threat of other weapons of mass destruction which can be carried in suitcases, i.e., the Oklahoma City bombing. It does not fear China, although it may have mixed feelings about China and not find the Chinese regime especially pleasing. The average American likes the trade with China.

What does this mean for Canada?

- Historically, there have always been tensions in bilateral relations between Canada and the U.S.. The question now becomes whether these tensions (as occurred over NORAD, NATO nuclear doctrine, dealing with Vietnam, Cuba, and Sudan), will affect trade, a central issue to the Canada-U.S. relationship. Canada's multilateral tendencies and its status as a longstanding champion of arms control arrangements have put us on a collision course with this administration.
- Some argue that the U.S.'s new incoherent foreign policy could be on a collision course with Canada. Some in the Canadian government and Foreign Affairs Minister John Manley are not part of that group. Minister Manley places high priority on good relations with the U.S. and has made trade, not security, his priority. He has distanced himself from the human security agenda. In areas such as trade, investment and economic links to the U.S., Canada can do business with the Bush administration. Economic pragmatism is putting Canada's traditional world order views aside.
- Canada should refocus its attention on the Bill in the House of Representatives which is calling for a rapid reaction military force.
- The U.S. sees itself as the sole superpower - this kind of thinking defines this administration and this would affect Canada in a disproportionate costly way. Energy security is one area where America feels particularly vulnerable. For Canada, a vulnerable-feeling U.S. is as difficult to deal with as an arrogant or inward-focussed U.S..

2. TRADE AND GLOBALIZATION
Speaker: Raj Bhala (George Washington University)

There are five momentous challenges facing the new Bush administration which are compounded by a leader in support of trade liberalization and by a world that has a deep concern about a *Pax Americana*.

5 Challenges Bush faces in Trade Policy:

1. Avoiding distractions: foreign policy and domestic

- Bush needs to learn quickly what he can and cannot accomplish so that he does not neglect the one area in which he can succeed, namely trade liberalization.
- There is a group of key personalities laying claim to trade policy. A single voice on trade is needed and Zoellick must attempt to maintain the ear of the President on this matter.

2. Rebuilding a consensus for trade liberalization domestically

- This consensus does not exist right now since Americans do not see trade as a new positive sum game. Americans see the major losses in the anti-dumping area, subsidies area, and safeguards areas.

3. Rebuilding the consensus for trade liberalization globally

- The greatest schism in the multilateral trading system is that between developed and developing states. Perceptions are that the WTO is an elite group dominated by four countries, that globalization has benefited an elite few and not the many (such developed states account for 10 per cent of the world's population), and that the hegemons (U.S., E.U.) are most able to fight. Least-developed countries (34 countries of which the largest is Bangladesh) did not appear on the Bush administration's radar screen. The Bush administration needs to do more to consider issues of developing countries. It needs to create robust trading partners in the developing countries and to address social justice issues.

4. Supporting the WTO

- A key questions here is how to develop a policy that incorporates both multilateralism and regionalism. The importance lies in the fact that the U.S. has, with its trading partners, spent seven years working on developing the WTO and broad trade policies. With the Bush administration's focus on regional trade policy, the question now becomes just how sincere is the commitment to multilateralism.

5. The Muslim World

- There is great concern in the Islamic world concerning the trade liberalization movement. Although there are three main groups with the Muslim world – traditional reform, neo-traditional reform, liberal reform – which respond differently to the West while looking to

the Koran, trade links are seen by most as major conduits for some unwanted infiltration of Western culture into the Muslim/Islamic world. Meaningful participation of Muslims in the WTO needs to exist.

DISCUSSION

- Two alternative foreign policy visions emerged in the post-war U.S., namely: (1) international economic cooperation and (2) forward U.S. military engagement, especially in Europe and Asia. A key question now is whether this vision of forward U.S. military engagement is still viable and did it succeed in transforming U.S. domestic society? Furthermore, can the domestic coalition hold to support forward engagement, especially in Asia?
- U.S. administration has not yet decided how to dialogue with much of the Islamic world on trade issues. There are two windows open for dialogue: (1) If we get rid of the stereotype of fundamentalists, the liberal reformist strain is approachable; and (2) There is also a basis for dialogue with neo-traditional forces who are creating new responses to the West.
- The U.S. has never been a true free trading nation. While Bush may champion the merits of free trade, there will be a parallel emphasis on stronger enforcement instruments and mechanisms to defend U.S. trading interests.
- The U.S. administration saw multilateralism as a pragmatic tool to aid foreign economic policy. It also believes that anything it does in terms of promotion of trade is morally good as is indicative by the sentiments of most free trade spokespersons who may be quite honest about believing that free trade opens up moral opportunities. Furthermore, the dominant value among Bush's trade policy people is democracy. Democratic values are a key to combine with bilateralism. It must be noted, however, that if democracy is seen as fundamental in the development of "Third World" countries then some of these countries actually have more liberalization than have some developed countries.
- There are still fundamental issues remaining between the EU and the U.S.. The issues of maintaining world order and international role making are key. The EU makes continuing efforts to constrain the U.S. to abide by the established legal system with regard to further multilateral trade efforts. It is worth noting how closely the disputes between the EU and the U.S. are being watched by developing countries. If these leaders of trade cannot work together under this rules-based system, how can we expect to market the merits of free trade to smaller and developing countries?
- There is no consensus in the world about free trade. The world is becoming increasingly friendly to the neo-liberalist paradigm and the only consensus lies among the elites of countries who have bought into neo-liberalism. Angus-Reid, in conjunction with the *Economist*, surveyed global public opinion on trade liberalization. Their findings show that roughly 49 per cent of people around the world are against further liberalization. There is an even greater disparity in opinion within the U.S., as an enormous opinion gap exists between the ardent free-trade elites and a more pessimistic public. The U.S. public has a remarkable understanding regarding the meaning, cost and benefits of free trade –

the public believes the costs outweigh the benefits.

- Canadians are, by a large majority, in favour of free trade and trade liberalization. However, these results can only exist if we believe that Canadians do not know what free trade is. The Canadian public may consider the health system more important than free trade but make no connection between the two.
- One way Bush is trying to garner support for trade liberalization and trade promotion authority (TPA) is by highlighting how the U.S. has fallen behind the curve in terms of pursuing preferential trading arrangements and how this fundamentally hurts American exporters.
- The focus on bilateral/regional FTAs over another multilateral round to help regain TPA stems from the:
  (1) View that NAFTA served as a catalyst in the completion of the Uruguay Round;
  (2) Need to lock in reforms to prevent backsliding; and
  (3) Belief that it is easier to negotiate with a smaller group of countries.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Steve Lee indicated that the goal of this series of roundtables was to think together about trends in U.S. foreign policy. The ideas from these roundtables will be put into an integrated report which will inform our DFAIT colleagues.

Our discussion today has shown the importance of the study of history. Some common themes included the value for the U.S. to consult with others, the importance of the opinion of the "Heartland" in the U.S., the value of multilateralism, the definitions of sovereignty and free trade, and issues of participation, transparency and democracy.

Some final questions to be asked and answered:

1. What is free trade?
2. What is globalization?
3. What is sovereignty? The 3 original NAFTA countries define sovereignty as:
   (a) national security (U.S.)
   (b) culture (Canada)
   (c) energy (Mexico)
4. What is the impact for Canada if the U.S. does go down the regionalism trail?
5. How can the Canadian government best be friends with the U.S. while maintaining its own interests?
6. It can be argued that the U.S.'s move to unilateralism is an issue of ground rules not resolved. Can a case be made for U.S. self-interest in multilateralism? Especially in the context of maintaining U.S. "room to manoeuvre"?
7. If the U.S. is moving to take military control of space and if humanitarian interventions are no longer the path of the future, how does Canada respond?

Toronto Roundtable on the Bush Administration's Foreign Policy: Challenges and Implications for Canada

List of Participants

May 18, 2000

Toronto, Ontario

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